

SERVICE STANDARD
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES
INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR LCPA FOSTER HOME PROGRAMS
EFFECTIVE 1/1/12

I. Service Description

Independent living (IL) consist of a series of developmental activities that provide opportunities for young people to gain the skills required to live healthy, productive, and responsible lives as self-sufficient adults. Independent living services should be seen as a service to young people that will help them transition to adulthood. IL services should be based on the individual learning plan that is guided by the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment. Youth receiving IL services must participate directly in designing their program activities, accept personal responsibility for achieving independence, and have opportunities to learn from experiences/failures.

Services should be provided according to the developmental needs and differing stages of independence of the youth but should not be seen as a single event. These services are a series of activities designed over time to support the youth in attaining a level of self sufficiency that allows for a productive adult life. Services should address a variety of preparatory requirements for independent adulthood and recognize the evolving and changing developmental needs of the adolescent.

All youth are to start receiving IL services at age 16. If a youth is placed in a LCPA foster home, residential or group home, the agency/facility is responsible for providing IL services as part of their pre diem. Youth should receive a minimum of three (3) hours per week of experiential IL instruction (should not include time spent on Activities of Daily Living). Twenty-five percent (25%) of the allotted IL instruction time per month can be group IL instruction. In addition a portion of the IL instruction time must be in the community. IL Services must be documented either by the foster parent or by the LCPA staff who is facilitating the IL instruction. Youth who have approved Medicaid waivers are not required to receive IL services.

IL services shall include individual guidance, case management, and soft skill independent living services as reflected in the Learning Plan (LP). Youth must be given an independent living assessment, the ACLSA, to determine the appropriate services. These services may include, but are not limited to,, self-esteem building, life interest explorations, and education in housing options, budgeting, money management, health care, locating community services, transportation options, secondary and post-secondary education, and interpersonal relationship skills.

The independent living assessment must include a comprehensive, written assessment of the youth's strengths as well as areas of improvement. The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) at www.caseylifeskills.org is the **only** assessment tool approved for use. This assessment must be completed within 30 days of placement or the youth's 16th birthday and updated annually. The assessment must be shared with the youth, caregiver and DCS or Probation within ten (10) days of completion.

Educational Services

Service providers will provide instruction or monitor that the youth receives educational services that include but are not limited to the following:

- Coordination with the youth's school on their Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Individual Transition Plan (ITP) for youth in special education.
- Providing tutoring support as needed and assistance with GED preparation if applicable.
- Assistance with locating driver's education training.
- Assistance with transportation to College Goal Sunday program to assist the youth in understanding the financial aid process.
- Assistance with completing the Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) and gathering needed documents.
- Assistance in the search for scholarships at the website of the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (www.in.gov/ssaci) as well as other websites and assist in the completion the required forms as well as gathering needed documents.
- Assistance with obtaining information on colleges or universities, including cost, by logging into the Department of Education's website www.nces.ed.gov. Additional information for Indiana schools and specialized vocational training programs may be found on the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) (www.statevoucher.org).
- Assistance in applying for the ETV program finds on the ETV website (www.statevoucher.org), if eligible, for secondary education opportunities.
- Provided information on post-secondary access and support services for former foster youth both in Indiana as well as outside Indiana (e.g.. Ball State University/Ivy Tech Guardian Scholars program; Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)/Ivy Tech ESP! Program; Nina Mason Scholars program at IUPUI/Ivy Tech Indianapolis).

Vocational and Employment Services

Service providers will provide vocational and employment services, either directly or by referral that include but are not limited to the following:

- Transport the youth to the local Work One Center and assist the youth in requesting aptitude testing and resume writing
- Assistance in exploring career options, Job Corps, AmeriCorps, Vista, and the Armed Forces.
- Assist the youth in obtaining job services through the Work One Center and explore possible intern positions through this program.
- Assist the youth in exploring and applying for volunteer opportunities in the community.
- Assist the youth in obtaining and completing job applications and provide opportunities for the youth to practice interviewing for different types of employment.
- Training related to employment such as appropriate dress, expected work behavior, positive workplace interaction, arrival at work and returning from breaks on time, and other issues related to maintaining employment.
- Assist the youth in the use of all available community employment and training resources including on the job training, job coach if eligible for service, and helping the young person access them.
- Developing job leads in the private sector and working with employers who may employ young people, including internships, job mentoring, apprenticeship, summer employment programs and other supportive services.

Health Services

Service providers will provide education or advocate for health services to the youth that include but are not limited to the following:

- Assist the youth in obtaining their Medical Passport from their FCM and ensuring that it contains current information related to their family health history, immunizations, operations, and childhood illnesses and includes the names of the youth's medical, mental health, and dental providers and their contact information.
- Transport the youth to visit the local community health clinic, mental health clinic, hospital emergency room, and urgent care facilities to familiarize the youth with the location of these facilities, services available and how to access services when needed.
- Provide education on obtaining a primary care physician and dentist and the importance of preventative medical and dental care to avoid urgent medical care facilities when possible.
- Provide age-appropriate education regarding basic hygiene and nutrition, medical and dental care, substance abuse prevention/intervention, pregnancy prevention, teen parenting education and sexually transmitted diseases and HIV prevention, risk prevention.
- Provide assistance with accessing formal individual and group counseling, including crisis counseling and family therapy and substance abuse treatment, family support and healthy marriage education.

Housing Services

Service providers will provide housing services that include but are not limited to the following:

- Arrange an interview and visit with apartment complex managers/landlords to allow the youth to understand the leasing process and view apartments in more than one location.
- Assist the youth in developing a budget to determine the amount of rent they are able to pay based on their income and other expenses.
- Provide education on tenant rights and responsibilities and the importance of following rules and regulation policies of the apartment complex or landlord.
- Explore with the youth the option of other housing arrangements such as host home with their current or former foster parents or relatives, not to include legal or biological parents, and shared housing with roommates.
- Arrange a visit or phone call with the youth to utility companies (electric, gas, water, phone) to gather information regarding the requirements of the company related to hook up charges, deposits, and the monthly cost of services.
- Provide education on how to avoid homelessness and arrange visits with the local homeless shelters, mental health day shelters, food pantries, and other services that are available in the event that the youth may ever become homeless.

Life Skills and Social Skills Services

Service providers will provide life and social skills training that include but are not limited to the following:

- Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) with the youth (and their caregiver for wards if possible) to identify the youth's strengths and needs.
- The learning plan, which is strengths-based, developmentally appropriate, based on the ACLSA which involves the youth and significant persons in its development and builds on the young person's positive behaviors and personal strengths.
- Opportunities to interact with other youth in small and large groups in learning activities related to independent living.
- Experiential learning opportunities in the areas of problem-solving, time management, conflict resolution, stress management, communication skills, interpersonal skills, community resources, support systems, and goal-setting.
- Experiential learning opportunities in accessing community resources such as 211, Department of Family Resources, local library, locating businesses or services, knowledge locating businesses or services in the use of city, street, and state maps, etc.
- Familiarize the youth with available public transportation by accompanying them in purchasing tokens or passes and visiting frequently used destinations in order to reduce fear and apprehension.
- Assist the youth in making arrangements for alternative transportation to an appointment when public transportation is not available.
- Financial training including developing a budget, banking, the use of money orders, use of credit, cost of rent-to-own versus purchasing, understanding interest charges and cash advance services. Arrange a visit to a bank to gather information on checking and saving accounts and how to open and maintain the account.
- Take the youth to multiple shopping destinations to compare prices for personal care items, cleaning supplies, and food items to help develop a budget for monthly purchases.
- Assist the youth in planning a menu, reading a recipe, purchasing the food, and preparing a meal.
- Take the youth to the Laundromat with their own soiled laundry and assist in the use of the facilities, supplies needed, money required for wash and dry loads, and time involved in this endeavor.
- Assist the youth in obtaining a State ID card.
- Assist the youth in maintaining a life book (available through the youth's FCM) that includes their birth certificate, Social Security records, court orders relating to their CHINS or probation case, high school activities, family information including names of family members and location, placement information, photos of friends and school activities, and other information important to the youth.
- Education on the cost of purchasing and maintaining a vehicle as well as title, licensing and insurance costs.
- Education on tax documents received from employers, filing income taxes and maintaining financial records.
- Assist the youth in obtaining their free annual credit report from all three agencies (www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/freereports.htm) to ensure their credit will not be an obstacle to renting.

Youth Development

Service providers will provide opportunities for social, cultural, recreational, and/or spiritual activities that:

- Are designed to expand the range of life experiences and are sensitive to the cultural needs of youth and youth with special needs.
- Form meaningful and sustaining relationships with adults, families, peers, and significant others and assist youth in managing these relationships.
- Introduce various available recreational and social activities for leisure time.
- Offer experiential learning in communication skills and conflict resolution management.
- Introduces the youth to volunteer activities in the community.
- Encourage participation in youth conferences and other developmental opportunities, which include leadership activities.
- Encourage participation in the Youth Advisory Board.

II. Goals and Outcome Measures

Goal#1

Timely provision of services for the youth and regular and timely communication with referring worker

Outcome Measures

- 1) 95% of youth will have an ACLSA and learning plan completed within 30 days of 16th birthday or date of placement and provided to the Probation Officer or FCM within 30 days of completion of the assessment. The ACLSA will be updated annually, the learning plan every six months and a Chafee Assessment at discharge.
- 2) 100% of all youth will have monthly written summary reports prepared and sent to the referring worker. All reports must be submitted electronically via the specialized DCS website by the 10th day of the month or billing will not be permitted.

Goal #4

DCS and youth satisfaction with services

Outcome Measures

- 1) DCS satisfaction will be rated 4 and above out of a possible five (5) points on the Service Satisfaction Report.
- 2) 90% of the youth who have participated will rate the services “satisfactory” or above.

III. Case Record Documentation

Necessary case record documentation for CHINS and probation youth receiving IL services must include:

- 1) Authorized DCS Referral/DCS Contract
- 2) Case Plan indicating the need for independent living services;
- 3) Initial Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment and ongoing assessments every year during the service provision period;
- 4) Documentation of regular contact with the referred youth and the DCS;
- 5) Monthly written reports, or more frequently if requested, regarding the progress of the youth provided to the referring agency, and
- 6) A Chafee Supplement report at case dismissal.
- 7) IL Learning Plan and updates